



**CITY OF SUNNYVALE
REPORT
Planning Commission**

September 12, 2005

SUBJECT: **2005-0724 – WHL Architects** [Applicant] **Virgilio V Romero, Et Al** [Owner]:. Application for **905 East El Camino Real** (near S Wolfe Rd) in a C-2/PD (Highway Business/Planned Development) Zoning District.

Motion Special Development Permit on a 27,907 square-foot site to allow a new carwash building at an existing service station.

REPORT IN BRIEF

Existing Site Conditions Gas station and car wash

Surrounding Land Uses

North Commercial shopping center

South Commercial shopping center

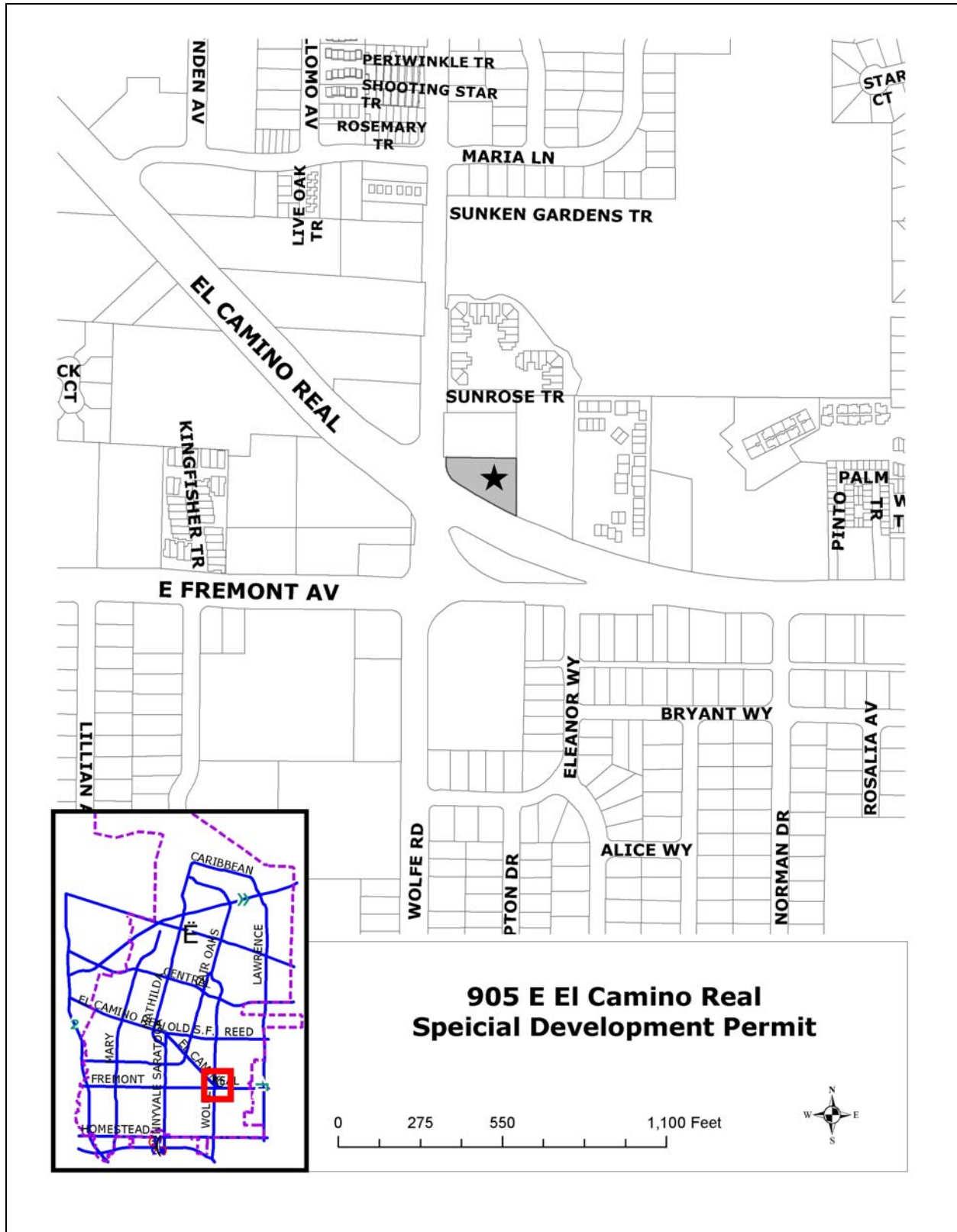
East Recreational vehicle park (Aloha Mobile Home Park)

West Commercial shopping center

Issues Circulation and Parking

Environmental Status Negative Declaration has been prepared in compliance with California Environmental Quality Act provisions and City Guidelines.

Staff Recommendation Approval with conditions



PROJECT DATA TABLE

	EXISTING	PROPOSED	REQUIRED/ PERMITTED
General Plan	Commercial General Business	Same	Commercial General Business
Zoning District	C-2/PD	Same	C-2/PD
Lot Size (s.f.)	28,444	Same	None
Gross Floor Area (s.f.)	3,277	4,706	15,348 max.
Lot Coverage (%)	12%	16%	35% max.
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	12%	17%	55% max.
Building Height (ft.)	18	31	75 max.
No. of Stories	1	Same	8 max.
Setbacks (Facing Property)			
Front	73	70	70 min.
Left Side	84	Same	None
Right Side	98	65	None
Rear	0	0	None
Landscaping			
Landscaping (s.f.)	3,043 (11%)	5,612 (20%)	20% min.
Frontage Width (ft.)	0-14	15	15 ft. min.
% Based on Floor Area	93%	120%	12.5% min.
★ Buffer (ft.) Adj. Residential	6	8	10 ft. min.
% Based on Parking Lot	13%	34%	20%
★ Parking Lot Area Shading (%)	0%	10%	50% min. in 15 years
Water Conserving Plants (%)	0%	70%	70% min.
Parking			
• Total No. of Spaces	3	7	6 min.
• No. of Standards	2	5	4 min.

	EXISTING	PROPOSED	REQUIRED/ PERMITTED
• No. of Compacts	0	2	3 max.
• No. of Accessible	1	1	1 min.



Starred items indicate deviations from Sunnyvale Municipal Code requirements.

ANALYSIS

Description of Proposed Project

The proposal includes a remodel and addition to the existing cashier building and restroom facility and remodel of the existing car wash from an automated wash to a hand wash. The fuel canopy areas and existing underground gas tanks will not be disturbed. The expansion of the existing gas station and the remodel of the car wash require a Special Development Permit.

The site use will include retail sales of gasoline, hand car wash services, incidental vehicular accessories in the gift shop, and sale of prepackaged soft drinks, cigarettes, and snack foods from automatic vending machines as allowed by Municipal Code.

Background

Previous Actions on the Site: There are no previously related planning permits.

Environmental Review

A Negative Declaration has been prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act provisions and City Guidelines. An initial study has determined that the proposed project would not create any significant environmental impacts with implementation of the recommended mitigation measures (See Attachment C, Initial Study).

Staff required the applicant to submit a Noise study and a Traffic and Circulation study. The noise study was conducted by Charles M. Salter and Associates to determine possible noise impacts on the residentially zoned property located to the east of this site (Aloha Mobile Home Park). Currently, this site is not developed with a residential uses, but has the potential to convert to this use in the future since the site is zoned R-4 (High Density Residential). The acoustical analysis determined that noise levels will not exceed SMC permitted levels during daytime hours but will exceed nighttime noise limits.

The study found the following:

- The blowers will generate noise at the eastern property line at a maximum of 64dBA,
- The vacuums will generate noise at the eastern property line at a maximum of 60dBA.

The Sunnyvale Municipal Code, Section 19.42.030(a) states:

Operational noise shall not exceed 75 dBA at any point on the property line of the premises upon which the noise or sound is generated or produced; provided, however, that the noise or sound level shall not exceed 50 dBA during nighttime or 60 dBA during daytime hours at any point on adjacent residentially zoned property.

Staff is recommending a Condition of Approval that a sound wall (masonry wall) be constructed along the eastern property to reduce the noise level to 50dBA or less during nighttime hours. Staff is recommending a second Condition of Approval that the hours of operation of the car wash and gas station shall be limited during nighttime hours since the property is directly adjacent to residential property. Staff is recommending the following hours:

- 1) Car wash and gift shop - 7:00am to dusk in the winter and 7:00am to 7:00pm during summer time.
- 2) Gas pumps only – until 11:00pm when the car wash is closed.

In addition to the Noise study, staff also required the applicant to submit a Traffic and Circulation study. The Traffic study was conducted by DKS and Associates to determine possible traffic and circulation impacts resulting from this project. In particular, staff wanted an analysis of the potential on-site queuing that is typically associated with car wash uses. Staff was concerned that the site is very small and that queuing could eventually lead to cars waiting in the public street.

The analysis surveyed four similar hand car washes in the Bay Area to determine appropriate customer levels at the proposed use. Based on standard traffic engineer trip generation rates and survey data collected from the four locations, the study found that the proposed use would not cause excessive queuing at the site. The queue lengths are estimated to be a maximum of three vehicles at the gas pump area and between five and ten vehicles at the drying areas. These peak vehicle lines will not exceed the capacity of the site, therefore, no mitigation measures were required.

Special Development Permit

Use: The site is currently a gas station primarily, with an optional car wash. A car wash can be purchased by customers at the time gas is bought at the pump but is not required. Under the new proposal, the use will be primarily a car wash and secondly a gas retailer. Gas can be purchased prior to a car wash purchase or gas only can be purchased during hours when the car wash facility is closed. Gas cannot be purchased during the day without also purchasing a car wash.

Customers will drive their cars up to the pump/vacuum area and then exit their cars and walk into the waiting room/cashier area. Car wash employees will then drive the cars from the pumps thru the car wash and out to the drying areas. The current car wash is entirely mechanized from the washers to the dryers. The proposed use will include a manual hand wash and automatic dry, with a final hand finish dry after cars exit the wash/dry area.

The gas station building use would include retail sales of gasoline, car wash services, incidental vehicular accessories, prepackaged soft drinks, cigarettes, and snack foods from automatic vending machines. Gift shop sales would include car accessories such as floor mats, air fresheners, oil and filters, upholstery accessories, mirrors, dash accessories, greeting cards, newspapers, magazines and small gift items. Sunnyvale Municipal Code (SMC) prohibits grocery sales (e.g. food, sundries, or beverages) in the form of products stored on shelves or in refrigerated cases at automobile service stations. Alcoholic beverages also cannot be sold at this site.

As conditioned, the car wash and gift shop would be open from 7:00am to dusk in the winter and 7:00am to 7:00pm during summer time. Gas only can be purchased from after dusk or 7:00pm until 11:00pm when the car wash is closed. During this time only the eastern most four pumps will be open so customers will be able to turn out of the site. Staff and the applicant expect a very low volume of cars during this time. These hours of operation have been included as Conditions of Approval.

Site Layout: The site is located at the corner of West El Camino Real and Wolfe Road. Currently there are three driveways leading into and out of the site. The applicant is proposing to remove the center driveway to improve the circulation on site. Removing the center driveway will also allow for increased landscaping (discussed below). Staff has reviewed the proposal and concurs that closing the center driveway is a good solution for the site layout.

The following Guidelines were considered in analysis of the project site design:

Design Policy or Guideline (Site Layout)	Comments
<i>City Wide Design Guidelines Setting A1: New projects shall be compatible with their surrounding development in intensity, setbacks, building forms, material, color and landscaping</i>	The proposed project is compatible with surrounding development with regards to front and rear yard setbacks, total landscaping area and building form.
<i>Site Organization B3: Siting of noise and odor generating functions on a site shall not create a nuisance for adjacent properties.</i>	Noise generated from the proposed car wash would be mitigated through the Conditions of Approval to ensure that the noise limit at the property line to the south and east and at the residential properties.
<i>Site Organization B10: Provide convenient and safe pedestrian and automobile access to the site from adjacent streets.</i>	The proposed driveways will provide convenient and safe automobile access to the site. Existing public sidewalks surround the site provides pedestrian access from the adjacent street to the site.

Architecture: The proposed building will utilize stucco material and wood trellis features for the design. The roof material will be composed of clay tile roof material. The building will be painted a two-tone tan color with the roof tiles a natural red. The maximum height of the building at the peak of the roof will be 30½ feet.

The following Guidelines were considered in the analysis of the project architecture:

Design Policy or Guideline (Architecture)	Comments
<i>City Wide Design Guidelines C5. Buildings shall have three distinct components: base, middle and top. Define each component by horizontal and vertical articulation.</i>	The proposed building incorporates a tower feature, a wood trellis patio cover, and a refinished exterior.

Design Policy or Guideline (Architecture)	Comments
<i>Material and Color F1. Develop a comprehensive material and color scheme for each project to tie in the various parts of the project. Choose variety of colors and materials to add interest to buildings.</i>	The proposed material and color scheme will add interest to the building by providing complementary colors within the stucco. An additional contrasting red roof will highlight portions of the building.

Landscaping: Current landscaping on site consists of only 11% total landscaping, which is nonconforming under current SMC. The applicant is proposing to increase the total percentage of landscaping up to the required 20%. The applicant is also proposing to increase the landscape buffer along the street frontage up to the required 15 feet. Currently it is nonconforming at 0 to 14 feet deep. Staff has included a Condition of Approval requiring at least five, 36-inch box trees be planted and maintained in this landscape buffer area as City street trees.

Finally, the required landscape buffer between commercial and residentially zoned properties is a minimum of 10 feet. The current landscape area is five feet five inches and is proposed to be widened to seven feet and five inches. This is the maximum distance feasible while still allowing vehicle access to the eastern gas pumps. The applicant is not proposing to move the existing gas pumps or the canopy structure. Staff is recommending a Condition of Approval stating that when the gas pumps or underground tanks are replaced, then the landscape buffer shall be made to be at least 10 feet if the adjacent property is still zoned residential.

Parking Lot Lighting and Fuel Canopy Lighting

Parking lot lighting and exterior architectural lighting will be reviewed at the time of building permit submittal by staff to ensure that proper lighting levels are met and that light is shielded from adjacent uses and properties. Staff is recommending Conditions of Approval requiring fuel canopy lighting to be recessed into the canopy architecture and that no lighting will cast across the residential property line.

The following Guidelines were considered in analysis of the project landscaping:

Design Policy or Guideline (Landscape)	Comments
<i>City Wide Design Guidelines General A2: Preserve and incorporate existing natural features, particularly trees, on a site into the landscape design of projects.</i>	The proposed landscape plan adds a minimum of five new street trees to the site. No other trees exist on the site.
<i>Peripheral B1: Provide a minimum of a 15 ft. wide landscape strip along the public street side of all developments.</i>	The proposed plan increases the landscape frontage width to the 15 feet required.

Circulation: The applicant is proposing that vehicles will enter from El Camino and Wolfe Road and queue in the gas pump area. Once vehicles are taken through the car wash, they are led to a hand drying area next to the landscape buffer along El Camino. This drying area can accommodate up to 10 cars at any one time. Based on the Traffic and Circulation study previously discussed, staff believes there will be a low volume of traffic at this site and that the proposed circulation pattern will be able to accommodate the potential queuing on-site. The City's Transportation and Traffic Division has reviewed the analysis and concurs with the results.

Parking: In order to accommodate the proposed retail use, additional parking must be provided on site. The gift shop is required to maintain 1 space per 180 square feet of floor area; therefore, the site requires six total spaces. Seven spaces, including one accessible space, are provided on-site. The canopy area and car wash facility, which are included as covered area of the site, also require parking for customers on-site but are given credit for the parking areas they cover.

The following Guidelines were considered in analysis of the project parking and circulation:

Design Policy or Guideline (Parking/Circulation)	Comments
<i>A4. Design internal driveways for safety and convenience.</i>	Internal driveways and circulation patterns on the site have been designed for safety and convenience.

Stormwater Management: This site does not require a stormwater management plan as the site is creating less than 10,000 square feet of impervious surface. The proposed car wash and gas station are subject to all Automotive Best Management Practices per Conditions of Approval.

Compliance with Development Standards/Guidelines: The proposed project complies with current development standards with the exception of required buffer landscaping, as previously discussed. No further improvements are required at this time.

Expected Impact on the Surroundings: The site will not have a negative visual impact from the street and surrounding properties. Staff finds the architectural style is suitable for this portion of El Camino Real. The Traffic Division has indicated that there are no significant traffic impacts expected as a result of this project. Possible noise impacts anticipated with this project have been mitigated through Conditions of Approval.

Transportation Impact Fee

The project is subject to a Transportation Impact Fee as specified in the Conditions of Approval.

Fiscal Impact

No fiscal impacts other than normal fees and taxes are expected.

Public Contact

Notice of Negative Declaration and Public Hearing	Staff Report	Agenda
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Published in the <i>Sun</i> newspaper• Posted on the site• 70 notices mailed to the property owners and residents within 300 ft. of the project site	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Posted on the City of Sunnyvale's Website• Provided at the Reference Section of the City of Sunnyvale's Public Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Posted on the City's official notice bulletin board• City of Sunnyvale's Website• Recorded for SunDial

Conclusion

Findings and General Plan Goals: Staff was able to make the required Findings based on the justifications for the Use Permit. Findings and General Plan Goals are located in Attachment A.

Recommended Conditions of Approval: Recommended Conditions of Approval are located in Attachment B.

Alternatives

1. Adopt the Negative Declaration and approve the Special Development Permit with the attached conditions.
2. Adopt the Negative Declaration and approve the Special Development Permit with modified conditions.
3. Do not adopt the Negative Declaration and deny the Special Development Permit.

Recommendation

Recommend Alternative 1.

Prepared by:

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Project Planner

Reviewed by:

Gerri Caruso
Principal Planner

Reviewed by:

Trudi Ryan
Planning Officer

Attachments:

- A. Recommended Findings
- B. Recommended Conditions of Approval
- C. Negative Declaration/Initial Study
- D. Letter from the Applicant
- E. Site and Architectural Plans

Recommended Findings - Special Development Permit

Goals and Policies that relate to this project are:

1. The proposed use attains the objectives and purposes of the General Plan of the City of Sunnyvale.

Land Use and Transportation Element

Policy C4.1 Maintain a diversity of commercial enterprises and industrial uses to sustain and bolster the local economy.

Adding the proposed car wash facility and gift store to an existing gas station helps maintain a diversity of commercial enterprises to the local which lacks a nearby similar use; therefore bolstering the local economy.

Policy N1.10.1 Locate commercial uses where traffic can be accommodated, especially during peak periods (e.g., lunch time and commute times).

The proposed commercial use would be located on a significant corner within the City of Sunnyvale, accommodating traffic during peak periods. The site is also located on Wolfe Road.

2. The proposed use is desirable, and will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property, improvements or uses within the immediate vicinity and within the Zoning District, in that the project is compatible with the existing uses on El Camino Real.

Recommended Conditions of Approval - Use Permit

In addition to complying with all applicable City, County, State and Federal Statutes, Codes, Ordinances, Resolutions and Regulations, Permittee expressly accepts and agrees to comply with the following Conditions of Approval of this Permit:

Unless otherwise noted, all conditions shall be subject to the review of approval of the Director of Community Development.

1. GENERAL CONDITIONS

- A. Project shall be in conformance with the plans approved at the public hearing(s). Minor changes may be approved by the Director of Community Development. Major changes may be approved at a public hearing.
- B. Obtain Building Permits prior to construction for the proposed work at the site.
- C. The Conditions of Approval shall be reproduced on the cover page of the plans submitted for a Building permit for this project.
- D. The Special Development Permit for the use shall expire if the use is discontinued for a period of one year or more.
- E. Hours of operation shall be limited to the following hours:
 - 3) Car wash and gift shop - 7:00am to dusk in the winter and 7:00am to 7:00pm during summer time.
 - 4) Gas only – 7:00pm until 11:00pm when the car wash is closed. During this time only the eastern most four pumps shall be open so customers will be able to turn out to of the site.

2. COMMERCIAL USE

- A. Out door storage of goods is not allowed. All storage shall take place within designated enclosed storage areas.
- B. The general property shall remain clean and free of debris and garbage.
- C. The building façade shall be maintained in good condition at all times.

3. BUILDING DESIGN

- A. All exterior architectural details that are included in the plans reviewed by the Planning Commission shall be included in the final building plans.

4. LANDSCAPING AND SITE PLANS

- A. A sound wall (masonry wall) shall be constructed along the eastern property to reduce the noise level to 50dBa or less during nighttime hours.
- B. When the gas pumps or underground gas tanks are replaced, the eastern landscape buffer shall be made to be at least 10 feet if the adjacent property is zoned residential.
- C. Landscape and irrigation plans shall be submitted for review and approval by the Director of Community Development prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.
- D. Landscaping and irrigation shall be installed prior to occupancy.
- E. The landscape plan shall include the following elements:
 - a. A minimum of five 36-inch box sized trees shall be planted as City street trees, as selected by the City Arborist.
 - b. All landscape details shall be coordinated with the City arborists.
 - c. Ground cover shall be planted so as to ensure full coverage eighteen months after installation.
 - d. All areas not required for parking, driveways or structures shall be landscaped.
 - e. Vines or other shrubs shall be planted along eastern perimeter where any new wall is located.

5. LIGHTING

- A. Submit details and specifications of all exterior lighting to be used on site for review and approval by the Director of Community Development.
- B. Fuel canopy lighting shall be recessed into canopy architecture and kept to a minimum.
- C. No lighting shall cast onto adjacent properties.

6. SOLID WASTE & RECYCLING

- A. A new recycling and solid waste enclosure is required on the eastern property line. The placement, size, and design shall be submitted to the Director of Community Development for review and approval.
- B. All recycling and solid waste shall be confined to approved receptacles and enclosures.
- C. Submit a detailed recycling and solid waste disposal plan to the Director of Community Development for review and approval.

7. WATER POLLUTION PREVENTION

- A. Discharge from carwash to sanitary sewer must meet City's affluent limits for wastewater per Sunnyvale Municipal Code 12.12.120.

- B. Detailed car wash specifications on the recycled water system must be submitted for review and approval by the Director of Public Works. If the car wash system is not a recycled water system an oil water separator must be submitted for review and approval by the Director of Public Works.
- C. Runoff from carwash shall not enter any storm drains on-site.
- D. Car wash and gas station will be subject to all Automotive Best Management Practices.
- E. Surface runoff pollution control measures shall be provided for parking areas, driveways, roofs and other impervious areas. This may include but not be limited to:
 - Direct rainwater from impervious surfaces to landscape areas or infiltration devices.
 - Reduce impervious areas with pervious areas.
 - Engineer structural treatment controls or landscape controls.
 - Regular scheduled pavement sweeping and catch basin cleaning.
 - Stencil all on-site catch basins with NPS "No Dumping" message.
- F. Prior to the issuance of a grading permit, a "Blueprint for a Clean Bay" shall be submitted and approved by the City.
- G. An Impervious Surface Data Calculation worksheet is required to be completed and submitted for the California Regional Water Quality Control Board prior to issuance of a Building Permit.

8. TRANSPORTATION IMPACT FEE

- A. The project is subject to a Transportation Impact.

9. SIGNAGE

- A. The existing monument sign shall be brought into conformance with current City standards (SMC) during building permit issuance.
- B. The Special Development Permit is not valid unless the sign is brought into conformance with SMC.
- C. Obtain a separate sign permit for any proposed signs associated with this business.